



## Local Historian Ross Patterson to speak at York Hall on November 13

November 3, 2016



Local historian Ross Patterson II will present “Elite Assault: The 85th Division in Italy, 1944-1945,” on Sunday, November 13, from 3 to 4 p.m. at York Hall, 301 Main Street in historic Yorktown. Sponsored by the York County Historical Committee, Mr. Patterson’s talk is presented to the public free of charge. He will allow time for questions following his presentation.

Mr. Patterson tells the story of the draftees of the 85th Infantry Division who left from Camp Patrick Henry to fight in Italy during World War II. The 85<sup>th</sup> returned to Camp Patrick Henry following the war’s end. Mr. Patterson presents the story of the 85th Division and its men during their training and participation in battle during the Italian campaign. The division saw service in three brutal Italian Front campaigns, but received little recognition from the public as most of its operations occurred after the Normandy Invasion. Maps and photographs are included in this presentation and help to further illustrate the action.

Ross Patterson II is the son of two Army officers and has lived in York County since 1996. He has a Bachelor’s Degree from the University of Mary Washington with a dual major in History and Historical Preservation. He received his Master’s Degree in History from Old Dominion University with a Maritime History Certificate. This presentation is based on his Master’s thesis research regarding the all-draftee 85th Infantry Division, which Mr. Patterson studied from formation to disbandment. Mr. Patterson’s exhaustive research shows that the 85th Division was not only a competent fighting unit, but that it actually outperformed many of the units serving in the more well-known European theater.

Mr. Patterson has published articles and a number of reviews on military history-related topics for several scholarly journals. He also has been active in many local historical organizations as an employee or volunteer, including the American Revolution Museum Yorktown (formerly the Yorktown Victory Center), the Virginia War Museum, the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, the York County Historical Committee, and Endview Plantation.

For more information about this presentation, please call Parks, Recreation, and Tourism at (757) 890-3500.

**Photo attached:** Local historian Ross Patterson II will deliver a free presentation entitled, “Elite Assault: The 85<sup>th</sup> Division in Italy, 1944-1945,” on Sunday, November 13, from 3 to 4 p.m. in York Hall, 301 Main Street in historic Yorktown. Mr. Patterson’s talk is sponsored by the York County Historical Committee. For more information, please call Parks, Recreation, and Tourism at (757) 890-3500.